

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) Method for processing speech,  
comprising the steps of:
  - receiving a speech input (SI) of a speaker (S),
  - generating speech parameters (SP) from said speech input (SI),
  - determining parameters describing an absolute loudness (L) of said speech input (SI),
  - evaluating (EV) said speech input (SI) and/or said speech parameters (SP) using said parameters describing the absolute loudness (L).
2. (Original) Method according to claim 1,  
wherein the step of evaluation (EV) comprises a step of emotion recognition.
3. (Currently Amended) Method according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims~~ claim 1,  
wherein the step of evaluation (EV) comprises a step of speaker identification.
4. (Currently Amended) Method according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims~~ claim 1,  
wherein a microphone array (MA) comprising a plurality of microphones is used for determining said parameters describing the absolute loudness (L).
5. (Currently Amended) Method according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims~~ claim 1,  
wherein a location and/or distance (D) of the speaker is determined.
6. (Currently Amended) Method according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims~~ claim 1,  
**characterized in that**  
the absolute loudness (L) is determined using algorithms for auditory and/or binaural processing.
7. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 5 ~~or 6~~,  
**characterized in that**

said absolute loudness (L) is computed by normalizing a measured loudness, or energy by said distance (D).

8. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 5, ~~6, or 7,~~

**characterized in**

that said distance (D) is determined using the time delay (TD) of the speech input between said plurality of microphones.

9. (Currently Amended) Speech processing system,

which is capable of performing or realizing a method for processing speech according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1 and/or the steps thereof.

10. (Currently Amended) Computer program product,

comprising computer program means adapted to perform and/or to realize the method of processing speech according to ~~anyone of the claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1 and/or the steps thereof, when it is executed on a computer, a digital signal processing means, and/or the like.

11. (Original) Computer readable storage medium,

comprising a computer program product according to claim 10.